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This Nathan is also unknown so far as I am aware. Perhaps the learned Librarian in Petersburg, Dr. A. Harkavy, who has at his command such rich Karaite treasures, might be able to communicate some further particulars as to the four Karaite authors here mentioned.

SAMUEL POZNAŃSKI.

### LEAVES FROM THE "GOLDEN BOUGH."

ISAIAH lxvi. 17, אַחֲרֵי אַחֲרֵי בְּתוֹךְ. These words are an old puzzle. Canon Cheyne (*Prophecies of Isaiah*) observes, "Early Jewish critics felt that some reference was required to the deity in whose honour the mysteries were celebrated. . . . Their general view seems confirmed by the common use of 'after' in technical religious phrases." He then refers the rites here described to the worship of Tammuz or Adonis. "But why should Adonis be called 'One'?" And again, in a footnote, discussing a conjecture of Lagarde, he says, "But no such name of a deity as 'ekhādū has yet been found." A passage in Mr. Frazer's work, *Aureus et foliis et lento vimine ramus*, may perhaps supply the desideratum. It will be well, however, to prefix another extract from the same source, vol. I, p. 319: "So closely did the rites of Osiris resemble those of Adonis at Byblus, that some of the people of Byblus themselves maintained that it was Osiris and not Adonis whose death was mourned by them (Lucian, *De dea Syria*, 7). Such a view could certainly not have been held if the rituals of the two gods had not been so alike as to be almost indistinguishable."

It is impossible, by any process of abridgment, to do justice to the sustained force, the *lentum vimen*, firm yet pliant, of Mr. Frazer's argument. The whole section on Osiris (*Ibid.* 301 et seq.) should be read. It must suffice to quote the following: "His character, as a tree-spirit was represented very graphically in a ceremony described by Firmicus Maternus. A pine-tree was cut down, the centre was hollowed out, and with the wood thus excavated an image of Osiris was made, which was then 'buried' in the hollow of the tree. Here, again, it is hard to imagine how the conception of a tree as tenanted by a personal being could be more plainly expressed. . . . As to the pine-tree in particular, at Denderah the tree of Osiris is a conifer, and the coffer containing the body of Osiris is here represented as

enclosed within the tree. A pine-cone is often represented on the monuments as offered to Osiris, and a MS. of the Louvre speaks of the cedar as sprung from Osiris. The sycamore and the tamarisk are also his trees. In inscriptions he is spoken of as residing in them; and his mother Nut is frequently represented in a sycamore. . . . In inscriptions Osiris is referred to as 'the one in the tree,' 'the solitary one in the acacia,' &c." (Lefébure, *Le mythe Osirien*, p. 191). Here then we have the solution. *The one in the tree* = אחר בתוך העץ, and the A. V., "one tree in the midst," is not so far wrong after all. But bearing in mind the words immediately preceding, from which it appears that the object of worship was placed in a garden, perhaps we should rather understand אחר בתוך הגן, and in this connexion it is difficult to avoid thinking of that other mysterious tree whose position "in the midst of the garden" is insisted on with an emphasis probably significant (see especially Gen. ii. 9 and iii. 3). Was the tree of life also a tree of Osiris or Adonis?

If the passage under discussion is to be understood as a polemic against the worship of Osiris, it is not surprising that the clause in question has no exact equivalent in the version of the Seventy. It would be highly offensive to the natives and the rulers of Egypt, while to Jewish piety it might appear to contravene the command in Exod. xxiii. 13.

I cannot now enter on the complicated questions connected with the criticism of Isa. lxv, lxvi. But provisionally it may be observed that if we could suppose even a partial reference in these chapters to the "family of Egypt" (Zech. xiv. 18), we might then interpret the opening words of ch. lxv in accordance with xix. 18-25. The word "thence" in lxv. 20 would no longer present a difficulty, and the expression of ver. 11, "ye that forsake the LORD, that forget my holy mountain," would gain fresh point. Finally, is it possible that in ch. lxvi, "vv. 1-3 are directed against certain Jews who wished to build a temple to Yahwè in" *Egypt*, as was ultimately done by Onias? Cf. xix. 19. I do not venture to affirm that this is the real explanation of these chapters. The true hypothesis is that which fits *all* the data, and the points mentioned may admit a different interpretation. The title, "One in the midst" [of the tree, or garden], may have been applied to the Syrian as well as to the Egyptian deity. But no one, I think, who compares what Mr. Frazer has written on the rites and myths of both, with what Cheyne and Robertson Smith have said on the passage before us, will doubt that the title of Osiris may legitimately be cited in explanation of these words. It is possible that variants may have existed, אחר בתוך העץ and בתוך הגן, and that uncertainty of text may have led, firstly, to a blank being left in

the MS. for revision never accomplished, and secondly, to the total omission of the last word; or **וְהָיָה** (abs.) might be understood in either sense.

ZECH. v. 5-11. The strange vision here related, with its striking, but at first sight unbiblical, personification of abstract qualities—Iniquity, *ἀδικία*, **וְיָ** in ver. 6, and Wickedness in ver. 8—receives a vivid illustration from a passage of the same work dealing with “human scapegoats,” vol. II, pp. 195, 196. “At Onisha, on the Quorra River, two human beings are annually sacrificed to take away the sins of the land. . . . The sacrifice of one of these victims was witnessed by the Rev. J. C. Taylor on February 27, 1858. The sufferer was a woman, about nineteen or twenty years of age. She was dragged alive along the ground, face downwards, from the king’s house to the river, a distance of two miles. The crowds who accompanied her cried, ‘Wickedness! wickedness!’ The intention was ‘to take away the iniquities of the land. The body was dragged along in a merciless manner, as if the weight of all their wickedness was thus carried away.’ In Siam it was formerly the custom on one day of the year to single out a woman broken down by debauchery, and carry her on a litter through all the streets to the music of drums and hautboys. The mob insulted her, and pelted her with dirt; and after having carried her through the whole city, they threw her on a dunghill or a hedge of thorns outside the ramparts, forbidding her ever to enter the walls again. They believed that the woman thus drew upon herself all the malign influences of the air and of evil spirits.”

Here, too, the whole section should be read in order to appreciate the full meaning of these observances. Apparently, from its association with the ephah and the talent, the wickedness referred to by Zechariah is the commercial dishonesty denounced in Micah vi. 10, 11, and elsewhere.

### THE RELATIVE **וְ** IN GENESIS.

vi. 3. For the unsatisfactory **בָּשָׂר הוּא בָּשָׂר** may we not read simply **וְהוּא בָּשָׂר**, *he also is flesh*? It is only necessary to suppose that a **וְ** has fallen out of the text, that the word **בָּשָׂר** has been noted in the margin by way of correction, and that it has been subsequently incorporated at the end of the clause of which it is properly the first word.